

217333

DeSanty, Tricia

**From:** Boyd, Jocelyn  
**Sent:** Friday, June 19, 2009 9:09 AM  
**To:** DeSanty, Tricia  
**Subject:** FW: Brookside Village Subdivision - Sewage Rate  
**Attachments:** Response to May 28th hearing.doc

**COPY**  
**Posted:** 6/19/09  
**Dept:** S.A.  
**Date:** 6/19/09  
**Time:** 9:45

**From:** Eddrena Truly [mailto:eddrenatruly@yahoo.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 18, 2009 3:47 PM

**To:** Commissioner.Whitfield; Commissioner.Wright; Commissioner.Clyburn; Chairman.Hamilton; ViceChairman.Howard; Chairman.Fleming; Commissioner.Mitchell; Boyd, Jocelyn; wmorgan@regstaff.sc.gov; jnelson@regstaff.sc.gov

**Cc:** mcaston@sjwd.com; ljohnson@spartanburgwater.org; MIKEFORRESTER@SCHOUSE.ORG; leebright@scsenate.org; ddculbreth@spartanburgcounty.org; Jessica\_simpler@demint.senate.gov

**Subject:** Brookside Village Subdivision - Sewage Rate

Commissioners:

Please see the attached letter/response to the Hearing held in Columbia, SC on May 28th.

Several attempts were made to attach pictures/slide show yesterday. File size was too large to accommodate. Uploaded the pictures/slide clip to YouTube.com in order for you to view - it complements the attached letter ([click here for link](#)). Plan to remove clip from the site within the next three weeks.

Thank you,

Eddrena

RECEIVED

JUN 19 2009

PSC SC  
DOCKETING DEPT.

P.O. Box 953  
Duncan, SC 29334  
(864) 415-6085

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June 17, 2009

Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
Attn: Docketing Department  
Post Office Drawer 11649  
Columbia, SC 29211

RECEIVED  
JUN 19 2009  
PSC SC  
DOCKETING DEPT.

**RE: Docket No. 2009-12-S**

Dear Public Service Commission Representative:

I received the letter/statement from the attorney offices of Elliott & Elliott, P.A. regarding Aqua South Carolina, Inc. efforts to locate sewer lines on my property in January. In late February before Duke Energy engineers began to dig the ground in my back yard, I asked if they had received paperwork regarding location of the sewer lines. They stated that what they received was nothing to give them an accurate/specific location of the sewer lines. If they received the same drawing that I received ("Exhibit #1" presented at the May 28, 2009 Hearing), then I do not assert that this is specific sewer line location information. The drawing I received (from Drain Doctor) looks like a sophisticated fifth grader drew it. It is not a plat whereas engineers can pinpoint exact locations of sewer lines.

Currently, at the entrance of the street where I reside, there is a mobile home (333 Milbank Road – light blue & white trailer) that has exposed pipe lines above ground in their front yard (see attached [pictures/slide show](#)). This has been like this for over 6 weeks. For about two months now residents in my area are greeted with the horrific stench of bodily excrements, feces, urine, waste, sewage that permeates the air due to this mobile homes sewage problem. The occupant of this home told me that Drain Doctor ([Aqua South Carolina, Inc.](#)<sup>a</sup> - contractor for Brookside Village) came out to check/fix the sewage problems that the home has. Occupant told me that Drain Doctor did not know where the adjacent sewage/man-holes were located (a long-time resident on Oakridge Court showed Drain Doctor employees where they were located). Drain Doctor dug a trench about six weeks ago and the pipes that you see in the attached [pictures/slide show](#) continue to lie there now as I type this correspondence. Nothing else was done. I asked the occupant where her toilet waste flows, used dish water, laundry water, etc. Occupant told me that she has no idea – "in the yard maybe?" Be aware, that in addition to the stench that residents smell from this mobile home's sewage problems, we also have to endure smelling the putridity from the Palmetto Landfill that is directly adjacent to the subdivision (from my understanding we are the only residential area in these United States that is so close in proximity to a landfill). Summer months are upon us, it is getting hot – who knows what variations of aromas will now be stewing in the air from the landfill and sewage.

I thoroughly have looked through every bill I received from SJWD Water District (Startex-Jackson-Wellford-Duncan). In regards to contact numbers for who to contact for sewage problems - there are none listed. Under the "Description" section it states "Brookside Sewage" and next to it the monthly charge of \$20.50. SJWD told me back in January that they also had problems contacting the Aqua Company. Again, my first contact with Aqua's customer service back in January was discourteous/non-informative (SJWD provided me with the company number that they had at that time). When I asked for information regarding Brookside Village in Wellford, SC and sewer line locations, the representative was stumped. She exclaimed that Aqua did not service any areas in South Carolina. She told me that she did not know anything about a Brookside Village.

On Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, I went to pay my bill – while there, I spoke with SJWD customer service agents who stated that a few weeks ago they received an updated contact number from Aqua to provide to customers when they have sewage problems. SJWD told me that they are receiving all the calls from unhappy customers regarding the possibility of their bill increasing as well as when they have sewage problems. They provided me the number for Aqua South Carolina, Inc Customer Service/Sewage problems as: 1-877 987-2782. This number does not match what Aqua has on their website for South Carolina customers ([\*see here\*](#))<sup>1</sup>. Brookside Village is the only community that Aqua has in the state of South Carolina.

Aqua South Carolina, Inc. boasts on their website that they have a "*strong commitment to enrich the lives of those who live and work in the communities we serve*" ([\*See here\*](#))<sup>2</sup>. What has Aqua South Carolina, Inc. done for the community of Brookside Village Subdivision in Wellford, SC since February 1996? What programs have they offered the Brookside customers that they receive money from? Will they ever offer the residents of this community quality services?

At the May 28<sup>th</sup> Hearing in Columbia, Aqua South Carolina, Inc. representatives stressed that the main reason for the massive rate increase request is due to an increase in price for the cost of chemicals used to process the sewage at the Spartanburg Water Treatment Facility. This does not correlate with what was stated in the initial "Notice of Filing and Hearing" that Brookside residents received in late January. The notice states "*According to the Application, the last wastewater rate increase was more than 12 years ago in February 1996. The Application reveals that during the twelve month test year ending June 30, 2008, the Company lost \$42,456. Further, after adjustments for known and measureable changes, the loss is \$130,728 and the Operating Margin is negative (30.25%). The Company asserts that the current costs outpace revenues and with no funds to pay expenses, the Company continues to borrow funds to pay for daily operations. Thus, the requested funds in the Application are necessary to maintain customers' quality of service.*" If you thoroughly peruse through the company's website, it clearly states increase in profits over the past several years. (*See the following: [Investor Relations](#)<sup>3</sup>, [Fact Sheet](#)<sup>4</sup>, and [Annual Reports](#)<sup>5</sup>*).

**Public Service Commission of South Carolina** – I am not willing or able to afford to pay extra for poor quality services. I am sure that everyone reading this does not freely give away their money for services that they are discontent with and see no improvements. The sewer system is dilapidated, outdated, and Aqua is increasingly profitable. To ask residents to pay more than the current high rate of \$20.50 is outrageous. If you allow Aqua South Carolina, Inc. (which is not located in SC) to get away with increasing the rate (this includes the settlement rate of \$37 that the ORS came up with), you will be giving your stamp of approval for Brookside residents to continue to smell (inhale) others released bowel movements, receive poor customer service

(from a company who does not know what areas they service), and raise profits<sup>6</sup> for a corporation off the backs of low-income South Carolina residents.

Sincerely,

Eddrena L. Truly

Electronic Attachments

**Links:**

Pictures/slide show: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4rqreA7Hp5M>

<sup>a</sup> <https://www.aquaamerica.com/southcarolina/Pages/Home.aspx>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aquaamerica.com/Pages/ContactUs.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.aquaamerica.com/Pages/CorporateGiving.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> <http://ir.aquaamerica.com/>

<sup>4</sup> [http://files.shareholder.com/downloads/WTR/650818963x0x238428/87EFE9D1-3215-4623-963A-7A26DE9143E3/Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://files.shareholder.com/downloads/WTR/650818963x0x238428/87EFE9D1-3215-4623-963A-7A26DE9143E3/Fact_Sheet.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://ir.aquaamerica.com/annuals.cfm>

<sup>6</sup> [http://files.shareholder.com/downloads/WTR/650818963x0x255023/9B40B083-F161-4A14-8CC0-14402A88B519/171857\\_DG3\\_LTR.pdf](http://files.shareholder.com/downloads/WTR/650818963x0x255023/9B40B083-F161-4A14-8CC0-14402A88B519/171857_DG3_LTR.pdf)